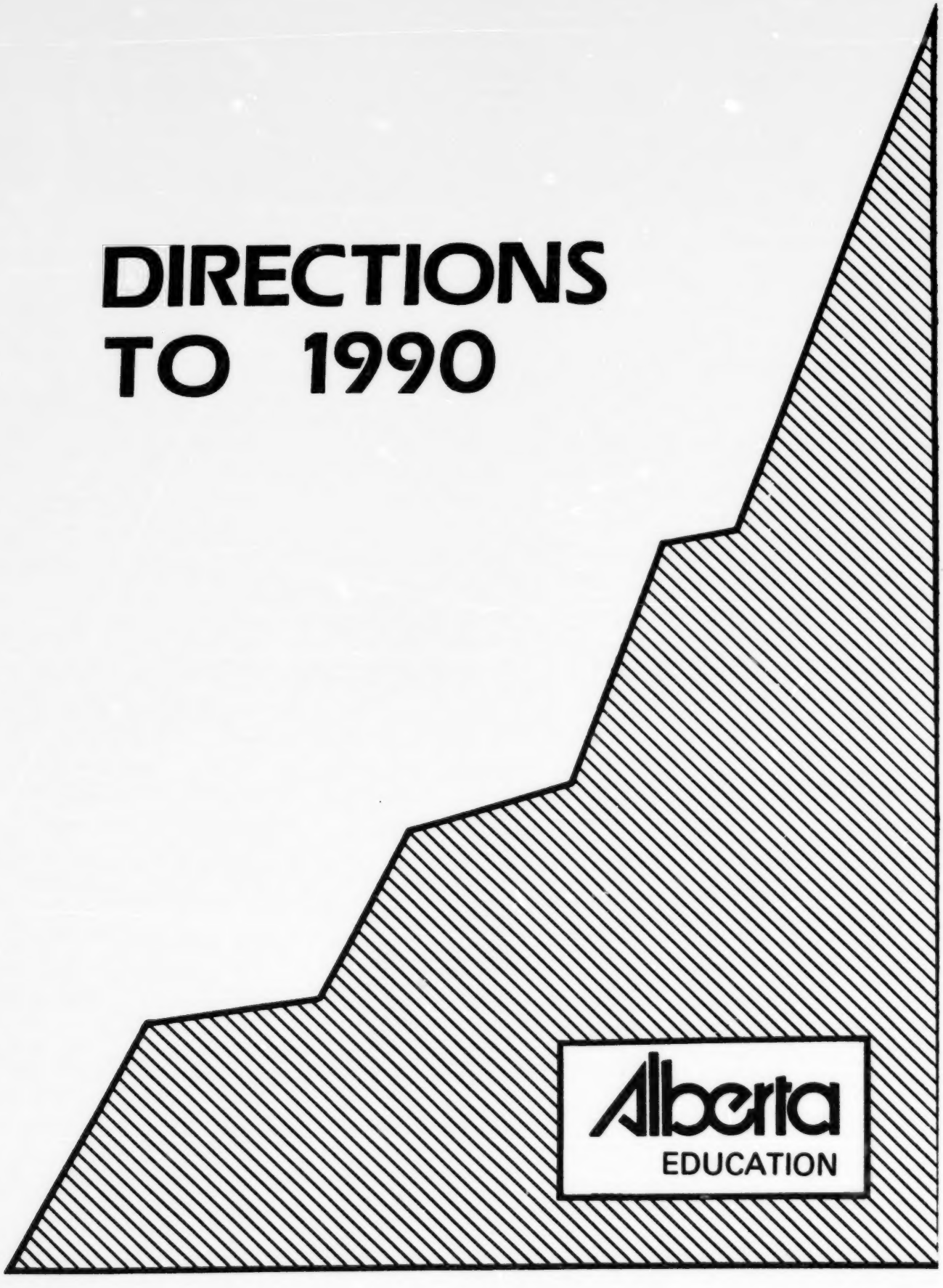
DIRECTIONS TO 1990



ALBERTA EDUCATION'S

FOUR YEAR PLAN

1987 to 1990

We shape our future by the choices we make. I wish we would realize that we can design an education system that will, in turn, shape the future, rather than always trying to predict the future, and see how people can fit into it. (Conversations On Education: 1985.)

Planning and Policy Secretariat,
March, 1987

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Students are the reason for education. Without students, there would be no need for schools, teachers, or Alberta Education. Alberta Education's sole purpose is to assist in providing the best possible education for students, challenging them to learn and perform to the best of their abilities. In achieving this purpose, the Department is committed to improving the quality of education so that it continues to address the individual needs and strengths of students, as well as the expectations of society.

It is a challenging time for education. There are major advances in knowledge and technology, a growing recognition of the diversity of student needs, a re-affirmation of individual rights and responsibilities, burgeoning public expectations, and changes in family structures, economic conditions, and population patterns. All of these changes emphasize the need for an educational system that not only is responsive to the changing world, but also is a shaping force which anticipates and contributes to building a preferred future. Education has become a key fulcrum of positive change and all participants in the educational system face tremendous opportunities and challenges.

For Alberta Education, the period from 1982 to 1986 was a very active one characterized by vigorous public discussion, and a profound re-examination of the purpose of education, what should be taught in schools, how programs and services should be managed and delivered, and the roles and responsibilities of participants. The period also saw an unprecedented number of actions by Alberta Education to initiate and manage positive changes in educational programs, management and governance.

In addition, the Department developed a set of core values (see Attachment) to guide its operations. These core values are:

- ensuring that all activities, either directly or indirectly, contribute to improved educational opportunities for Alberta's students;
- supporting and encouraging educational leadership, innovation, and excellence;
- promoting and consolidating a policy-based approach to the management of education;
- advancing accountability and the establishment of high standards in educational programs, management and governance;
- enhancing public sector stewardship;
- strengthening co-operation and participation among all participants;
- increasing and recognizing staff professionalism; and
- improving the quality of services to the public.

The period from 1987-1990 will be dramatically different for education in Alberta, as compared to the first half of the decade. Evidence indicates that Alberta's economy will continue to fluctuate for some period of time, perhaps until 1990 or beyond. This will result in major constraints being placed on government resources, the size of government, and its ability to undertake new initiatives. All provincially funded institutions will be called upon to do more with less. There will be a greater need for innovation, efficiency, and effectiveness to ensure that educational funding allocated by the Legislature is used in the best possible way to benefit Alberta's students. The key challenge lies in managing restraint without compromising the quality of education and, where possible, to use opportunities assertively to improve the educational system.

This document outlines the directions and specific priorities which Alberta Education proposes for the next four years. This Plan enhances the ability of the Department to continue providing strong leadership to Alberta's educational system by maintaining essential programs and services, and by implementing initiatives to make substantial improvements in education to 1990 for the benefit of Alberta's students.

Since planning is a continuous process, this Plan will need to be revised as the needs of students change and as new conditions affecting educational programs and services emerge over the four year period. The present Plan must also reflect the likelihood that programs and services required beyond 1990 may differ significantly from those of today.

SECTION II

TRENDS AND ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION, 1987-1990

The following trends were identified as having potential for impacting educational programs and services in Alberta over the next four years.

Social

- Changing Demographics
- Changing Family Structures
- Spread of AIDS
- Knowledge Explosion
- Technological Advances

Economic

- Economic Instability
- Employment/Income Patterns
- Economic Restructuring

Educational

- Cost of Education
- Teacher Demand and Supply
- Teacher Wage Settlements
- Teacher Self-Governance
- Private/Independent Schools
- Language Programs
- Content of Education
- Demand for Accountability and Participation
- Adult Education

Public Policy

- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Alberta Government Policy Directions

Fifty-three (53) trends and eighty-four (84) associated implications are identified in the table on pages 5-15. These have provided one source of information for developing the Four Year Plan for Alberta Education.

The following considerations should be kept in mind when reviewing the trends and associated implications described in the table on pages 5-15:

- Alberta Education's resource limitations may require a phased-in response to some trends; other trends may not require action by the Department; and still other trends may be beyond Departmental influence.

- Some of the trends may require action by other organizations; school jurisdictions; professional organizations such as the Alberta Teachers' Association, Council of Alberta School Superintendents, and the Alberta School Trustees Association; other government departments; and private sector companies such as publishers, software producers and vendors that provide educational products and services.

- The way trends are perceived reflects the basic value orientations of individuals and organizations. The identified trends and their implications may be perceived as problems or crises demanding a response, or alternatively, may be perceived as opportunities for positive action. For example, the knowledge explosion can be perceived as a problem for keeping curricula current, or alternatively, as providing opportunities for the development, production and marketing of innovative learning materials.

SIGNIFICANT TRENDS AND POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION: 1987-1990

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
1. SOCIAL	
1.1 Changing Demographics	
Population: During the 1987-1990 period, the population of Alberta is expected to grow by 4.2% or 100,916. The average annual growth rate will be about 1.0%. The 5-9 age group will grow by 9.0% or 17,000; the 10-14 age group will grow by 4.3% or 7,500; and the 15-19 age group will decrease by 3.1% or 5,700. School enrollments at the elementary level are expected to increase by 9.4%, and at the junior high level by 4.4%. Enrollment at the senior high level is expected to decline by 2.0%. This decline may be offset by students staying in school longer because of difficult economic times, and by adults returning to school to upgrade their skills and knowledge.	School facilities, funding, program delivery and staffing will be variously affected by the increase in elementary and junior high school enrollments and the decline in senior high school enrollments.
The Elderly: The proportion of elderly people in Alberta's population is increasing. Presently, 11.5% of the population is over 60. By the year 2000 this percentage will grow to 12.4%.	Research evidence suggests that the cost of supporting an elderly population is significantly greater than the cost of supporting the school-aged population. Education may have to prove its worth relative to other social service priorities, especially during an era of fiscal restraint.
Rural/Urban Migration: There will be continuing migration from the rural areas to the urban centres. Alberta's rural population will decline from 23% in 1981 to less than 14% in 2001.	There may be an increasing perception by rural parents and other educational interest groups that program inequities exist between urban and small rural schools. A review of rural education may be necessitated by the lower rural population base, closure of small schools, declining enrollments, and reduced revenues/resources. Boards of rural jurisdictions with reduced enrollments may have increased difficulty providing a comprehensive range of programs - core, complementary and special interest courses. Schools in these districts will likely focus on the core curriculum. There may be a need to develop more flexible and efficient ways of using school buildings (e.g. using school space/empty classrooms for adult programs, distance learning activities, community activities).
Immigration: International immigration will continue to increase moderately.	The increasing multicultural nature of Alberta society may impact on education. For example, schools may need to give more attention to cross-cultural education, second languages, and the cultures and lifestyles of the countries in the Pacific Rim, and other nations with which Alberta has economic ties.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
1. SOCIAL continued	
1.2 Changing Family Structures	
Size of Families: The number of children per family is decreasing and the number of families without children is increasing. At the height of the post-war baby boom, there were nearly four births per woman. By 1983, the birthrate had fallen to an all-time low of 1.7 births per woman, and this decline is expected to continue.	Parents will have a shorter period of contact with schools. This has implications for parental involvement with schools. There may also be a greater need for schools to develop more focused communications with parents in order to improve involvement.
Single Parent Families: The number of single parent families is increasing. Alberta has the nation's highest percentage of single parent families (10%), and this proportion is expected to increase at a rate of 1% every five years under current conditions. One-half of all single parent families have incomes below the poverty line as defined by Statistics Canada. A recent study reported that students from single parent families make up 33% of Edmonton's inner-city school population.	Programs to improve teacher understanding of the needs and problems of single parent families may need to be considered. More families may request both day- and after-school child care programs for children of school age. For example, a 1985 survey in Calgary indicates that 64% of single parents require before school, lunch, and after school care. Additional costs may be incurred to accommodate children requiring care during non-instructional hours. Also, child-care and other social services may compete with education for available public resources.
There is an increase in the divorce rate. More than 55% of all marriages fail in the first four years and this contributes to Alberta having the highest divorce rate in the country.	There may be an increasing need for special services such as psychological counselling in schools.
Women in the Work Force: The expansion of employment options and opportunities for women has contributed to the increased number of families where both parents are working. In 1981, 51% of married Canadian women participated in the labour force, compared with 33% in 1971. A recent federal study on Canada's future labour market development predicts that 75% of all women between the ages of 25 and 54 will be in the job market by 1990. Currently, Alberta has the highest percentage of working women in Canada (61%).	The increased participation of women in the labor force will result in more women being available for recruitment into the teaching profession and other occupations. It may be necessary to include in the school curriculum some course information about the changing roles and career opportunities available to women. It may also be necessary to review and eliminate sex-role stereotyping from the learning resources used in Alberta's schools, and to encourage female students to consider the expanding range of career alternatives available to women.
1.3 Spread of AIDS	
The rapid spread of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is developing into a major health problem, and public concern about this terminal disease is increasing. In particular, concern is growing in the public school system because of pronouncements by public health specialists that sexually active teenagers will be the next AIDS "high risk" group. The federal Minister of Health estimates that some 50,000 Canadians have been exposed to the AIDS virus and between 20 and 35 per cent may develop the disease. University of Alberta epidemiologist, Dr. Colin Soskone recently estimated that there are as many as 4,600 Albertans carrying the AIDS virus.	There will be increased pressure from some parents, health authorities, and other interest groups for an AIDS education program in the public schools. What children are taught about AIDS in the schools will continue to raise troubling, and often controversial moral questions, and will give new urgency to the debate about the role of the school in providing sex education. It will be necessary for government authorities, school boards, parent/community groups, and health authorities to cooperate in designing an appropriate AIDS education program for the public schools.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
1. SOCIAL continued	
1.4 Knowledge Explosion	
Changing Knowledge Base: Current research shows society's knowledge base is doubling every 5.5 years. This rate of change is expected to continue.	Teacher and administrator training programs may need to be reviewed in recognition of ever-changing knowledge. As well, there is a continuing need to assess whether curriculum changes reflect current knowledge, particularly in science, social studies and vocational education. The role of some teachers may need to be reshaped to enable these teachers to help students learn "how to learn". Knowledge specialists may need to be used to assist in teaching subject areas undergoing rapid changes. There are increased opportunities to develop, produce, and market innovative learning materials.
1.5 Technological Advances	
Schools: The use of computer and electronic technology for educational and administrative purposes will continue to increase. A 1986 Alberta Education study reported 93.2% of Alberta's schools have one or more microcomputers, resulting in a provincial student-computer ratio of 17:1, the lowest in the country, and the fourth lowest in North America.	There is a need to determine to what degree computers really make a difference in the quality of instruction and learning outcomes. As computer technology becomes more widely available to schools, some upgrading may be needed to alleviate possible shortages of computer literate educators. The educational system may use technology to enhance the equity of educational opportunities for students , especially in remote areas. Because school districts have differential access to computers, some inequities may initially emerge in the use of technology. There is a continuing need to review and evaluate hardware and software, licensing agreements, and maintenance and upgrading policies in order to determine which products are most appropriate for educational and administrative purposes. Standards may be required to improve the technological compatibility between schools and Alberta Education, thereby facilitating movement towards an integrated electronic information processing network. Provision must be made for space and other facilities that will be required by computer technology. Security of information and student records may become an increasing concern for school administrators and Alberta Education.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
1. SOCIAL continued	
Homes: The number of Alberta school children with both video-cassette recorders (VCRs) and computers at home is increasing. For example, a 1986 Alberta Education Communications Corporation (ACCESS) study reports that 61% of full-time Alberta Correspondence School students have VCRs at home, and 32% have computers. A May 1986 survey indicates that the proportion of Canadian homes with VCRs increased from 23.4% in 1985 to 35.1% in 1986. Some 39.5% of Alberta households have VCRs, the highest of all Canadian provinces. In 1983, only 6.4% of Canadian households had a VCR.	With computer and information technologies more widely available in Alberta homes, there are more opportunities for diversified learning situations, such as using technology to enhance Alberta Correspondence School services and other distance education. Additionally, schools may need to examine more effective ways to integrate technology in homes with school-based technology.
Industries: Canadian businesses and industries are becoming increasingly computerized. In a recent survey, three-quarters of all Canadian establishments reported the introduction of some computer technology during the first half of the 1980's.	There may be a demand that the school systems integrate computers more rapidly into the curriculum, especially in vocational courses. Technological changes in innovative companies have resulted in a need for new or substantially altered vocational skills.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
2. ECONOMIC	
2.1 Economic Instability	
Provincial Economy: Many current economic indicators forecast an unstable economic environment: declines in oil and gas revenues, in commercial and housing investments, in the price of agricultural products, and reductions in Alberta's exports to the U.S.; increasing total Provincial government debt (budget deficit is estimated to be about $3 billion); increase in the trade and service sectors but decrease in the industrial sector; and uncertainty over free trade with the U.S. Alberta's resource royalties declined from $4.3 billion in 1985 to about $2.5 billion in 1986, significantly contributing to the 20% total reduction in provincial revenues. A 60% drop in oil prices has drained the province of $10 billion worth of economic activity. A 1986 Conference Board of Canada report notes that although Alberta's output will expand in 1988, a real growth of only 0.6% is predicted. A 1986 study by the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board forecasts crude oil prices to recover in the 1990's. Alberta will once again experience healthy economic growth averaging about 2.4% per year in the 1990's.	Decreased economic activity in Alberta will result in lower revenues and budgetary and fiscal restraints, affecting the funding for education in the Province. Reduced revenues will be reflected in suspension of selected programs, and may affect teacher salaries as well as the implementation of new or revised programs. The educational system will be expected to be more efficient, effective, accountable, and results oriented in order to manage restraint. School boards may need to be more innovative in managing provincial grants and local revenue to support educational programs and services. Some small jurisdictions may need to reassess their educational programs, and may need to examine suspension of non-core programs, resource sharing with other jurisdictions, and boundary reviews. Education may become more politicized as interest groups seek to affect educational policy under current economic conditions. Traditionally, the service and trade sectors have had comparatively lower educational requirements for employment. As these sectors continue to grow, students may leave school earlier to take jobs with these industries. Alternatively, the service and trade industries may raise their educational requirements for employment and these would encourage students to continue their schooling.
Growing National Deficit: There are growing Canadian and U.S. government budget deficits. The Canadian deficit reached $38.2 billion in 1985. The U.S. deficit reached $220 billion by the end of 1986.	The growing Canadian and U.S. deficits may have a negative impact on the Alberta economy (e.g. loss of potential investors, business taxes, loss of exports). Also, federal government economic restraint measures may affect some transfer payments to the province.
Conflict in the Persian Gulf: There is an increasing concern among international oil specialists that an escalation of the Iran-Iraq war could cause a shift in the world supply of oil, and consequently, unsettling movements in price. If the war escalates it may cause a disruption in the supply of oil from the Gulf, and oil prices could be driven sharply higher. If hostilities cool and exports from the region increase, prices could be forced down sharply, compounding the problems caused by the lower oil price of 1986. Currently, there is speculation that the oil cartel is considering to set oil prices at less than $20 U.S. per barrel.	As the health of the provincial oil sector rests largely on the activities of the international oil market, the events in the Persian Gulf will be a critical factor in the strategic planning and policy decisions of government and business leaders.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
2. ECONOMIC continued	
2.2 Employment/Income Patterns	
Unemployment: Alberta's unemployment rate increased from 3.9% in 1981 to 11.2% in 1984. Unemployment was 10.8% in January 1987. In Alberta's cities, it was over 12%. Across Canada the rate was 9.7%. The working-age population in Alberta is growing, making it difficult to reduce the unemployment rate. Albertans 15-24 years of age are experiencing the most job losses. In January, 1987, the unemployment rate for this age group was 17.2%.	Continuing unemployment, competition for jobs requiring limited skills, and higher post-secondary entrance requirements may cause students to stay in school longer, thus increasing the demand for programs and services. Parents and students will be increasingly concerned about their future economic livelihood, the types of jobs that will be available to students, and the role of schools in preparing students for the changing economic environment.
Poverty: A 1985 National Council on Welfare report on Poverty in Canada noted that the family poverty rate in Alberta, which in 1981 at 8% was the lowest in the country, had doubled to 16% by 1984. In 1982, the latest year for which these figures are available, Alberta's 154,500 working poor under age 65 represented 59% of all low-income people in the province. The national average was 44%. The number of Albertans on social assistance is increasing with corresponding increases in costs. In 1986, there were 65,390 social assistance cases, involving about 144,000 Albertans. The number of social assistance cases increased by 3.2% as of the first half of January, 1987, bringing the total to 67,456. Increased numbers are forecast if the current economic situation continues. As well, further declines are expected in the personal disposable income of Albertans as a result of the province's employment situation.	The increasing poverty rate will result in more children coming from homes where incomes are below the poverty line. More school-based programs in remedial education and counselling services may be needed to deal with increasing numbers of children with special needs. If economic instability continues for the next few years, it will aggravate the income disparities between those who earn incomes from employment and those who must depend on government support. Provincial revenue shortfalls and expenditures for social assistance and other social services may impact the level of funding support for education. The fiscal capacity of the government and local agencies to generate tax revenues and to fund and support educational programs and services will be affected by the increasing number of Albertans whose personal incomes have declined or who are receiving social assistance.
2.3 Economic Restructuring	
There is a shift to a new economic structure, with new processes, new products, accompanied by increased world competition.	The shift to a new economic structure will require an emphasis on new occupational skills. There will be an increase in the rate of skill obsolescence as job restructuring accelerates. Rapid change has increased the need for Canadians to be more flexible and adaptable, as well as more competitive internationally. There may be a need for increased emphasis on entrepreneurial skills in the school curriculum.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
3. EDUCATIONAL	
3.1 Cost of Education	
Expenditures: There has been a steady increase in education expenditures in Alberta. The total expenditure per student increased from $2,955 in 1981 to $4,085 in 1985, an increase of 38% or 7.6% annually.	There may be increased public and professional scrutiny in regard to receiving value for public funds expended. As a result, there may be a need to determine the relationship between increased funding and improved educational results (e.g., student performance). Opportunities exist to find innovative and cost-effective ways of improving the quality and efficiency of education (e.g., possible increase in use of paraprofessionals in the classroom). There may be increasing concern regarding provincial/local share of total educational costs.
Revenues: There has been a steady increase in the revenues collected by Alberta's school jurisdictions from sources such as book rentals, transportation fees, and tuition fees from non-resident students. Total revenues collected increased from $79.5 million in 1982-83 to $89.6 million in 1984-85, which is about 5% of total operating revenue.	There may be more need and opportunity for joint ventures between the public and private sectors to raise revenues and/or to provide for alternative educational programming. Under current economic conditions, the impact of increasing the local property tax will need to be reviewed carefully.
3.2 Teacher Demand and Supply	
Demand/Supply: Demand for additional teachers in Alberta was initially estimated to increase during the forecast period. However, in this period of general economic restraint, the demand may be less than anticipated. A reduction in educational expenditures may affect the overall demand for teachers. The current oversupply of teachers will likely be marginally reduced over the next four years. Teacher shortages may continue in some subject areas (e.g., French, Mathematics, Special Education).	Teacher shortages in certain subject areas may require a review of accreditation for out-of-province teachers. There may be a need to use subject matter specialists (e.g. French Language) to teach, with modified preservice requirements.
Teacher Characteristics: The teaching profession is aging. The average age of teachers in Alberta increased from 36.1 years in 1975-76 to 38.2 years in 1985-86.	There may be significant increases in early retirements and pension payouts.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
3. EDUCATIONAL continued	
3.3 Teacher Wage Settlements	
During the 1981-85 period, teacher salaries in Alberta increased by an average of 10.5% annually. Salary increases ranged from about 12% in 1981 and 15% in 1982, to about 2% in 1984 and 4% in 1985. Recent salary settlements are in the order of 4% in 1987 and 2% in 1988. A 1% increase in teacher's salaries across the province would require an additional $12 million.	Because of government and school jurisdiction initiatives to manage restraint, there may be pressure to reconsider 1987-88 settlements. Settlements for 1988-89 and 1989-1990 may also need to reflect the current economic situation. Some school boards may re-examine the grid system which guarantees annual salary increases in some teacher contracts. Teacher strikes/labour unrest may be possible as school boards respond to reduced educational revenues, and may put pressure on the relationship between teachers and boards. Some teachers may challenge the legality of teacher lay-offs if these appear to be unfair/improper dismissals.
3.4 Teacher Self-Governance	
The Alberta Teachers' Association will continue to lobby for more self-governance for the teaching profession.	The Alberta Teachers' Association may lobby more vigorously for public support to maintain and/or increase the professional and economic status of teachers in the light of current economic conditions. There may be a need to establish new credentials for superintendents and other educational administrators.
3.5 Private/Independent Schools	
The number of independent private schools is growing. The number of private schools in Alberta increased from 116 in 1982 to 153 as of September, 1985, and may continue to increase modestly. Selected groups of parents will continue to regard private schools as a viable and preferred alternative to the public school system. A recent survey reported 34% of Albertans would send their children to private schools if it did not cost more. In 1984-85, funds were provided to school boards for 55 home schooling students in Alberta. In 1986-87, it is estimated that school boards will be applying for funding for about 360 to 400 home schooling students.	The current funding of private schools on a partial basis is accepted by the public. There may be more pressure from parent users to increase provincial funding levels of private schools. If Alberta Education provides more funding to private schools under current economic restraint conditions, there may be increased resistance from the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Trustees Association. There is an increased demand for home schooling but the number of students overall remains small.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
3. EDUCATIONAL continued	
3.6 Content of Education	
Curriculum Content: The public debate about school reform continues: what is the role of school in society; what is adequate education; what should schools teach, particularly in times of economic and social change.	There is continuing difficulty in developing and implementing an appropriate curriculum to satisfy all interest groups. In times of economic restraint, there may be a need to reconsider the range of programs offered by schools.
Special Education: An increasing proportion of Alberta's education budget has been allocated to special needs programs.	There may be a need to review in what ways the level of program funding for special education may impact the ability of the educational system to offer quality 'core' or 'basic' education to the majority of students.
Instruction: The demand for individualized instruction and the teaching of moral values and job-related skills remain strong and could increase.	There is potential to use technology, para-professionals, and content specialists to assist in providing instruction.
3.7 Language Programs	
A rising student interest in languages and the growing number of immigrant children in Alberta's urban public schools have increased student enrollments in second/foreign languages. For example, the Calgary Separate School Board has identified about 40 countries of origin of students in the separate school system. Some 365 immigrants were taking English as A Second Language classes in 1986-87, up from 273 in 1985-86.	The rising student interest and increased enrollments in second/foreign language programs may increase the demand for more language programs and qualified language teachers.
There is a continuing demand for the provision of instruction in French and French Language Programs.	There may be funding implications if additional programs and services are provided in French. There may also be a need for additional French Language teachers.
University of Alberta entrance requirements in the Bachelor of Arts program are placing increased emphasis on a second language. As of May, 1989, students will not be admitted to the Faculty of Arts with a deficiency in a second language.	The more stringent University of Alberta entrance requirements may result in increased student demand for second language programs. Some students may return to high school to acquire a second language credit or to make up a deficiency in a second language.
3.8 Demand for Accountability	
Public expectations and demand for accountability, and for receiving value for public funds expended on education, appear to be increasing.	Reporting and communicating educational results effectively to the public may become a major vehicle to demonstrate accountability.
Parents, guardians, and students are using the courts more to force the school system to be more accountable, and to codify rights to education in statute law. For example, the 1986 case of a Red Deer family suing the public school board and its superintendent is still in process. The family claimed negligence in the provision of education for their daughter.	Increased litigation may impact on educational access as more parents demand that all educational programs become fully accessible to their children. There is a need to continue improving evaluations, including student, teacher, program, school, and school system evaluations, in order to improve the accountability of the educational system.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
3. EDUCATIONAL continued	
3.9 Public Participation and Support	
Participation: There appears to be a continuing demand by parents for participation in educational decisions, especially at the school level. One outcome of this interest is that more school boards are conducting community surveys to determine public satisfaction and confidence.	There may be more opportunity for educational agencies to conduct community surveys and to develop improved reporting mechanisms. There may be a need for increased public participation, and for more partnerships involving the public and other education stakeholders in educational decision-making. Consequently, educational agencies may need not only to review the public consultation process to improve participation, but also to ensure they maintain a capacity to respond quickly to issues requiring more immediate resolution. Some training may be needed to help teachers learn how to encourage and manage parent/community involvement for the benefit of students.
Support: A 1986 survey indicates Albertans have a generally positive view of the educational system, and are willing to support quality education. Fifty-three per cent (53%) of Albertans surveyed feel that education is better now than 25 years ago, compared to the national average of 42%, but support decreases with age.	School boards and educational institutions may need to seize the opportunity to capitalize on this reservoir of support, and to do even better.
There is an increase in the number of urban taxpayers with no children in school. For example, a 1985 study by the Calgary Board of Education found 70% of taxpayers in Calgary have no children in school.	A positive response by the educational system to this period of restraint has the potential to improve the support from families with and without school age children.
3.10 Adult Education	
Basic Adult Education: In 1981, the Canada census indicated there were 239,000 Alberta adults over the age of 15 and out of school who had not completed Grade 9. A 1984 survey indicated 13 percent of Alberta adults had less than Grade 8.	An organized adult student population may emerge that could demand more adult education programs and services.
Employability: The number of adults requiring basic education programs is growing as a result of Alberta's economic situation. To compete successfully in the changing job market, more adults are going back to school to upgrade their skills and knowledge. Alberta has the highest adult education participation rate (30%) - for all levels of education -in Canada. Increased numbers of people are making career changes. One recent estimate is that individuals will make up to four different career changes during their lifetime. This may increase in the future.	Basic adult education programs (e.g., upgrading, literacy courses for illiterate adults) could face modification because of economic restraints. The opportunity exists for greater cooperation among learning institutions and government departments to address the educational needs of adults.
Private Schools: There are increasing numbers of privately owned schools in Alberta competing with the public education system to meet adult re-training requirements.	The potential exists for the private sector to develop partnerships with the public or private education sectors to provide training to meet changing job requirements.

TRENDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION
4. PUBLIC POLICY	
4.1 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms	
The Charter guarantees Canadians basic rights and protection from discrimination in areas such as age, race and sex. Since 1982, the Charter has been used for nearly 2000 Court challenges to demand right of access to education, language, and minority programs.	Students, parents, and guardians will be using the courts more to challenge policy decisions and rulings pertaining to education. Consequently, school boards, government and educational institutions may be going to the courts more, adding legal costs to current educational expenditures. Suits will either heighten awareness of Charter issues and/or prompt positive action to prevent continuing challenges. As a result of Charter challenges, there may be a demand for educational systems to provide a greater diversity of educational programs. Court rulings may affect a significant number of Acts, regulations and policies, as well as other issues such as defining special education, and the rights of special needs students to programs and services. More staff training may be needed for teachers and administrators to ensure that dealings with students and staff follow natural justice and are not discriminatory. There will be major funding implications if additional educational services are required for French language students and handicapped groups. For example, educational agencies may need to hire additional bilingual staff and provide more services in both official languages. There may be an increasing emphasis on the rights of students (e.g., students' demand for access to all personal records).
4.2 Alberta Government Policy Directions	
The key directions are: - reducing the budget deficit; - reducing the size of government; - diversifying the economy; - making the oil and agricultural sectors viable; and - creating jobs for Albertans.	It will be necessary to suspend, modify, or eliminate some existing programs and services in order to maintain essential programs and to implement initiatives to improve the quality of education. There will be a reduction in the size of Alberta Education, and selected Departmental functions may be privatized. There will be modifications in overall government services, resulting in more departments downsizing and becoming more efficient to offset budgetary restrictions.

All the identified trends and associated implications are considered important. The following summarizes those considered the most significant for education in Alberta over the planning period, given the need to maintain and improve the quality of education during and after a period of fiscal restraint:

- o increasing concerns about the rising cost of education and its impact on improving education (e.g. the quality and outcomes of the teaching-learning process, educational productivity and student performance).
- o the continuing need to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the educational system.
- o increasing demand to provide a broader diversity of educational programs and to respond to parental concerns about the content of education.
- o increasing school enrollments at the elementary and junior high school levels, and declining enrollments at the senior high school level.
- o the rapid increase in new knowledge and advances in educational technology, and the increasing difficulty of curricula changes and teacher training programs to keep pace.
- o rural depopulation and the pressure for positive provincial and local government action to improve the equity of educational opportunity in rural areas.
- o economic instability and restructuring, government restraint, and the concern about the impact on education as a result of changing economic and provincial funding levels.
- o increasing demand to deliver programs dealing with adult literacy and job retraining.
- o increasing demand and need for collaborative educational decision-making between the public and private sectors.

The foregoing outline of trends and associated implications demonstrates that there are many potential forces which will impact on Alberta's educational systems in varied and complex ways. These trends and implications illustrate the many divergent and sometimes conflicting pressures and opportunities that will face all decision-makers during the next four years. As well, new trends and implications will emerge which will necessitate a re-evaluation of previous decisions and some revisions to this Four Year Plan in response to these emerging forces.

SECTION III

EDUCATION IN 1990

It is impossible to predict the future with any degree of certainty. However, it is important to try and describe where education could and should be in 1990. This description takes into account the many opportunities for education arising from significant societal trends and associated implications, government policy, economic constraints, and Departmental initiatives. This approach permits Alberta Education to design a plan that will assist the Department in seizing opportunities to shape the future of education, and in monitoring its progress to achieve that future.

The following is a brief description of what that future may look like.

Improved Student Learning

The improvement of student learning will be the primary focus of education, and will be emphasized in a new School Act.

The core programs in secondary schools will provide students with the knowledge, thinking and problem solving skills that enable them to participate effectively in and to shape the next stage of their lives - further education or entry into the job market. There will be more widespread public and professional acceptance, supported by preliminary research findings, that the new secondary education program is providing students with knowledge and skills more reflective of current and emerging requirements. Once the Secondary Education Plan Implementation is well underway, planning will commence for a review of elementary school programs.

The integration of early childhood development principles with practices in elementary education will have been implemented in some jurisdictions. As a result, children will benefit more fully from continuity of significant learning experiences from the Early Childhood Services Program to Grade 6.

Student learning will also be improved by teacher excellence being encouraged and recognized by the teaching profession and the Department. This will occur through mechanisms such as awards and teaching effectiveness programs. In addition, the Response Centres of Alberta Education will be effectively coordinating services for special needs students.

More schools will encourage teachers to coordinate the use of para-professionals, subject matter experts, and technology as appropriate to provide quality and cost-effective education to students. Classroom instruction will be enhanced by the increased participation and involvement of parents and community resources.

Effective educational technology will be a more important component of the learning process, both in the classroom and for distance education. Students will be more confident and competent in the use of technology as a learning tool. The use of technology in education will become a regular component of teacher training programs. Schools will take advantage of the increasing number of microcomputers and video cassette recorders in homes to complement and enhance student learning opportunities.

Increased Equity

Students in Alberta will have more equitable and improved access to quality educational opportunities. The number of small school closures will have decreased as government and some school jurisdictions will have taken innovative steps to deal with the issues of economic viability and the quality and equity of educational programming. These actions will involve, but not be limited to: re-allocation of resources; amalgamation of some jurisdictions; establishment of consortia among jurisdictions to share resources more effectively; and incorporating more distance delivery services to complement the regular day programs. Differential treatment of jurisdictions to compensate for differences in local revenues will provide improved equity of educational opportunitity.

Enhanced Flexibility

A more flexible educational system will exist, where available resources are used more innovatively to meet the individual needs of students. For example, there will be greater use of challenge examinations and flexible scheduling to allow for differences in student situations and learning abilities. The educational system will have managed the current economic conditions by maintaining essential programs and services, and will have used opportunities assertively to enhance the quality of education.

More schools will offer specialized educational programs. This will result in increased competition for students, with schools being required to do a better job of communicating their educational philosophy and programs to parents. Parents will be able to do more 'shopping around' to find schools that meet the perceived needs of their children. A modest increase in the number of private schools in Alberta, and greater access to courses from the Alberta Correspondence School, other institutions and the private sector, will expand the range of choices available to parents and students.

Improved Responsiveness and Efficiency

Alberta Education, after re-organizing and downsizing, will have become a more streamlined, efficient and responsive organization. The Department will have established a 'track record' for doing more with less. The modifications to the organization and functioning of Alberta Education will have been facilitated by the implementation of a staff training and development plan designed to assist staff in achieving organizational goals. Greater efficiencies

will have been achieved through means such as further simplification of procedures, better use of technology and, where appropriate, greater use of joint ventures and the private sector. As well, responsibilities and staff will be reassigned to match priorities identified as essential to the maintenance and improvement of education. The Department will have implemented a simple, but effective system to assess educational productivity, and also will have assisted school jurisdictions to manage fiscal restraint.

Regional Offices will have effectively achieved an appropriate balance in carrying out their monitoring, evaluating, consulting, auditing and performance certification responsibilities in regard to Departmental programs and services. Ongoing evaluation of teachers, principals, superintendents, schools, and school systems will have improved substantially over the four years and generally will be viewed as an essential and practical element for improving education and the profession.

Alberta Education will have made significant progress in using technology for electronic messaging, student records and financial transfers, thereby facilitating more effective and efficient information management and communications. The majority of managers, professionals, and clerical staff in Alberta Education will use technology effectively, thus resulting in improved productivity and service to clients. The Department will have developed and partially implemented a strategic plan for the role of technology in education to the year 2000.

Alberta Education will have communicated better in clarifying its expectations for school systems, including the need for school systems to demonstrate local leadership. Selected partnership arrangements involving the pooling of limited resources by government and other stakeholder groups, will be developed to maintain and enhance the quality of educational programs and services.

A number of 'lighthouse' schools serving as centres of excellence will have been identified. These schools will be implementing innovative approaches, techniques and processes in areas such as teaching-learning, educational management, finance, integration of technology, training, and curriculum. Communication and diffusion plans would have been implemented to enable these innovations to be disseminated throughout the provincial educational system.

The Department will be moving toward full implementation of a management of education approach which is exemplary in Canada's public sector. Alberta Education, with jurisdictions and other participants, will have created a Toward Excellence Educational Management model representing a blend of appropriate public and private sector management techniques.

Clarified Roles and Responsibilities

There will be a more streamlined and easily understood legislative structure governing education. The legislative structure will facilitate a policy, non-regulatory approach to providing the required direction in education. It will also encourage the use of professional expertise and judgements in education. The roles and responsibilities of key participants in the educational system will be clarified and will be more flexible in order to meet unanticipated issues or changes in society and education.

Teachers will be governed by new legislation and will assume increased responsibility for professional matters, including self-governance. Regulations will have been amended to upgrade the qualifications for superintendents and principals and to provide for voluntary superintendent certification.

Schools and teachers will be able to deal more effectively with the various issues raised by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, such as natural justice and the rights of special needs children, including the gifted and talented. In addition, teachers, principals and superintendents will place more emphasis on establishing educational goals, evaluating their achievement, and communicating the goals and evaluation results clearly to parents.

It will be a challenge to attain this future, and achieving it will require that all participants in the educational system in Alberta:

- effectively coordinate their diverse human resources.
- utilize wisely the approximately $5.5 billion in provincial funds that will be allocated to Education over the four year plan period.
- demonstrate innovative and creative means to improve the quality of learning opportunities available to students.
- communicate and cooperate effectively with each other.

SECTION IV

ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES

This section identifies criteria that will assist the Department in making decisions regarding the mix and level of program grants and services provided to school jurisdictions, and in determining specific Departmental priority initiatives designed to improve the quality of education in Alberta.

The following criteria were used in establishing Departmental priorities. Programs and services, and initiatives were assessed on their ability to:

- meet the educational needs of students in core programs;
- maintain or improve equity of educational opportunities;
- meet government policy directions;
- meet statutory obligations;
- achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness;
- meet commitments made to the educational community;
- respond to significant trends.

Existing Programs and Services

Alberta Education provided more than $1.2 billion of grants to school boards and other educational agencies in 1986-87, through approximately 30 existing programs or grants.

During a period of fiscal restraint, the Department may need to modify, temporarily suspend, or potentially eliminate some programs and services. Those programs which are essential and impact on the largest number of students will be maintained at appropriate levels. Alberta Education, as a key participant in education, is committed to maintaining the core educational programs together with appropriate programs for special needs students. Alberta Education's specific decisions about programs and services over the four year plan period will reflect priority principles such as maintaining core programs which impact most students. Similarly, school boards and other educational agencies will have to make decisions about priority program areas over the plan period.

Initiatives to Improve Education

In addition to the grants provided to school boards and other educational agencies, Alberta Education will initiate a number of cost-efficient activities which will assist school jurisdictions to manage and improve the development and delivery of educational programs and services to their students.

The Department, in response to current economic conditions, will also reorganize and downsize, and streamline its operations to become more efficient and effective. The reallocation of resources will be directed toward priority programs, services, and initiatives which assist school jurisdictions and educational agencies. Internal Departmental support functions will be assigned a lower priority and staffed accordingly.

The following initiatives will be commenced during the four year period, but some initiatives, for example those scheduled for start-up in 1989 or 1990, will not be completed by the end of the forecast period. The implementation of initiatives may also be affected by limited resources. The initiatives are ranked in priority order.

Priority One Initiatives

- School Act
- Secondary Education Plan Implementation
- Alberta Education Re-Organization
- Managing Restraint
- Response Centres
- Council on Alberta Teaching Standards
- French Language
- Native Education
- Technology in Education and Distance Education
- Management and Finance Plan
- Articulation of Early Childhood Services and Elementary Education

Priority Two Initiatives

- Teaching Effectiveness
- Rural Education Review
- Human Resource Management
- County Act
- Teaching Profession Act
- Centres of Excellence
- Superintendent/Principal Qualifications
- Elementary Education Review

These initiatives and the results expected are described in further detail on pages 23 to 34. All of the initiatives emphasize the need for continuing innovations to improve the quality and delivery of education during and after this period of restraint.

SECTION V

INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE EDUCATION, 1987-1990

This section briefly describes Departmental priority initiatives including their expected outcomes, which Alberta Education will commence in the next four years to improve education in Alberta.

Priority One Initiatives

The following priority one initiatives have been identified for the forecast period.

The School Act

A Draft Bill for a new School Act will be introduced in the Legislature, and if proclaimed, it will be implemented. The new School Act will have:

- defined and delineated the roles and responsibilities of all participants in the educational system: students, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, boards, associations, and government.

- addressed current and emergent educational issues such as:

  - the rights of children to access an education and how far these rights extend,
  - the conditions governing private schools and home schooling,
  - the provision of minority French language education,
  - the distribution of taxes, including corporate assessment and Electric Power and Pipeline assessment,
  - the rights of parents, and the involvement of parents and the community with respect to the education of children,
  - the approaches to the resolution of conflicts including student placement, French language programming, suspension or dismissal of a pupil, home schooling, programs of choice, and school closures,
  - the definition of important terms such as "student" and "school",
  - the definition of student residency, and allocation of responsibility for the education of students,
  - the consideration of financial accountability and public access.

Secondary Education Plan Implementation

Significant progress will be made towards the implementation of the Policy announced in June, 1985. Implementation will include:

- a restructuring of most of the courses at the junior and senior high school level so that each course will have a required and elective component. The required component will result in a more standardized

Priority One Initiatives continued

curriculum for each course throughout the province whereas the elective portion will allow for flexibility to meet individual needs and interests of students. These courses will also be available in French.

Programs and courses will assist the student in:

- acquiring basic knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes;
- developing the ability to think conceptually, critically, and creatively, to acquire and apply problem-solving skills, and to apply principles of logic; and
- becoming prepared for the workplace or further education (e.g., entrepreneurial skills).

o Core Courses: Priority will be given to the revision of social studies, mathematics, language arts, and physical education, and to the implementation of new courses in health and personal life skills (grades 7-9), career and life management, and general science (grades 7-12).

o Complementary Courses: At the junior high level, initial priority will be placed on revision of selected program areas (e.g., music and home economics) and development of new courses (e.g., ethics and agriculture). As the development of senior high school core programs nears completion, consideration will be given to the revision of vocational education programs.

o Developed work experience programs in non-traditional occupations for female students, and provided the necessary learning resource materials, support mechanisms and introductory programs to assist in expanding the range of career opportunities available to female students. This initiative corresponds with the government's policy on education for female students and will serve to heighten awareness of the changing roles of women.

Alberta Education Re-Organization

Since Alberta Education reorganized in 1982, the environment within which the Department operates has changed significantly and is expected to continue to change. Within the context of economic restraint and the need and opportunity for increased innovation, the Department will implement a new organizational structure. As a result of its implementation, Alberta Education will have:

o continued to provide strong leadership to Alberta's educational system and to demonstrate exemplary public sector management.

o downsized, become leaner and more efficient.

o anticipated and responded quickly to social, political, economic and technological changes.

Priority One Initiatives continued

- o implemented government policy and directions more effectively.
- o improved coordination and management of the planning, policy, budgeting, evaluation and control functions.
- o improved the integration of information services including an improved technological capacity.
- o improved the integration of Early Childhood Services and Special Education with related Departmental activities.
- o improved the curriculum design and implementation process.
- o enhanced quality services to the public and government.
- o implemented a set of Core Values (see Attachment) to guide decision-making and professional judgements.
- o improved productivity by more effective management of the Department's human resources.
- o established a basis for on-going organizational improvement.
- o assessed potential improvements in efficiencies through greater use of project teams, joint ventures, and privatization.

Managing Restraint

Alberta Education will implement a series of actions to assist school jurisdictions to manage restraint and to make continued improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of educational system operations. Over the plan period, Alberta Education will have:

- o provided school jurisdictions with guidelines, consultation, and workshops in such areas as establishing educational program priorities, suspending capital building plans, reducing expenditures, and generating increased revenues through means such as the use of reserves and surpluses.
- o provided limited additional financial assistance to the small number of school jurisdictions who can clearly demonstrate unusual financial hardship as a result of changing economic or provincial grant circumstances.
- o assisted school jurisdictions to identify short and long-term strategies and plans to implement more cost-effective operations while still improving the quality of educational programs.

Priority One Initiatives continued

Response Centres

The Response Centres, designed to provide consultative services, program advice and information about special needs students to school jurisdictions, teachers, parents, and others, will have:

- coordinated the provision of assessment and diagnostic services for the learning impaired, learning disabled, and physically impaired.
- initiated services through which parents, teachers and other participants in education can obtain advice concerning special needs educational matters.
- implemented an electronic networking and information referral system which will minimize response times in disseminating special needs educational information as required.
- provided workshops and training on a cost-recovery basis, primarily aimed at special education teachers.
- implemented an inventory of clinical and treatment service agencies and professionals for referral to teachers who require assistance for their special needs students.
- established pilot projects with other departments and agencies to co-ordinate and integrate multiple services for special needs children.
- assisted jurisdictions in dealing with special education needs of children.

Council on Alberta Teaching Standards

Established in June, 1985, as a replacement for the Board of Teacher Education and Certification, the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards will have:

- advised the Minister on programs for teacher preparation, and requirements for Alberta teaching certificates.
- implemented a practice review procedure that allows for the expeditious investigation of teachers alleged to be incompetent.
- recommended to the Minister the actions required for dealing with teachers found to be incompetent, which may include the suspension or cancellation of a teaching certificate.
- clarified the respective roles and responsibilities of Alberta Education and the Alberta Teachers' Association in dealing with alleged teacher incompetence.
- reviewed Department policy on accreditation for out-of-province and foreign teachers.
- implemented, in cooperation with Alberta Education and other education stakeholders, a program to recognize teacher and school excellence.

Priority One Initiatives continued

French Language

The new School Act, which will reflect recent Court decisions, will have:

- o determined an appropriate role for the operation of French Language facilities and instruction.
- o specified how and to what extent French Language programs and facilities will be funded.
- o clarified the obligation of school boards to send minority language students to other school jurisdictions for appropriate programs and to establish French Language programs or distinct facilities.

Native Education

The Native Education Project is designed to enhance the opportunities for Native students to acquire a high quality education, and to provide opportunities for all Alberta students to develop an understanding and appreciation of different Native histories, cultures and lifestyles. By 1990, Alberta Education will have:

- o assisted school boards to implement training programs in Native Education to strengthen teacher and administrator awareness of Native cultures and life styles so that they can better assist Native students.
- o developed and distributed Native Education Learning Resources to schools.
- o assisted school boards to develop programs for the teaching of Native Languages.
- o included aspects of Native heritage, cultures, and life-styles in the studies that are taken by every student in Alberta.
- o assisted school boards to develop and implement extended Native studies for students who wish to explore and experience Native traditions and life styles.
- o assisted school boards to implement programs and services to assist those Native students who need special or additional instruction in English as a Second Language.
- o assisted school boards and Native people to develop and deliver enrichment programs for exceptional Native children, including the gifted and talented.

Priority One Initiatives continued

- o provided assistance to school boards for assessing and interpreting accurately the standardized tests written by Native students.

- o implemented a system to deliver more effectively programs and services that will address the needs of students in isolated communities.

Technology in Education and Distance Education

Alberta Education will encourage and support the use of appropriate cost-effective technologies to improve educational management and administration, classroom management, and instruction to improve student achievement.

Alberta Education will have:

- o developed a plan for the role of technology in education to the year 2000.

- o implemented procedures and systems to encourage technological literacy, and integration of appropriate technology into all curricula.

- o implemented, in cooperation with stakeholders, a system for effective/efficient acquisition, production and distribution of educational software and courseware.

- o piloted the implementation of an electronic computer network between the Department and school jurisdictions to transfer information electronically, including student records and school finances.

- o implemented an office automation network in Alberta Education in which 80% of all clerical staff and 60% of all professional staff and managers use compatible microcomputers.

- o encouraged and supported other government departments, consortia, and the private sector to produce and market educational software appropriate to Alberta's needs.

- o implemented policies and procedures in cooperation with stakeholders, to ensure that technology and software in Alberta schools are systematically replaced, upgraded and maintained.

- o implemented an Electronic Information Processing plan for the efficient and effective coordination of internal computer activities, including the establishment of a unit to provide information and services in the use of educational technology to the school jurisdictions.

Priority One Initiatives continued

Alberta Education through the Alberta Correspondence School will have:

- developed a number of core courses to be delivered via technology.
- piloted systems to enable students to access Alberta Correspondence School courses using technology.
- established procedures with various partners for the development, delivery and marketing of Alberta Correspondence School products and services.
- expanded Alberta Correspondence School technology-based programs to rural areas, as appropriate.
- developed and piloted challenge examinations to allow for differences in student situations and learning abilities.

Management and Finance Plan

The Management and Finance Plan was initiated in 1984 and implementation will be near completion by 1990. The general purpose of the plan is to implement a more effective and efficient approach to managing education, with particular emphasis on achieving results. By 1990, Alberta Education will have:

- become more accountable by implementing more effective monitoring, evaluating, auditing, and reporting procedures.
- become more flexible by replacing numerous regulations with fewer, broader provincial policies within which jurisdictions will be able to make decisions to meet local requirements.
- implemented Departmental policies regarding student, teacher, program, school, and system evaluation.
- simplified program funding and administrative procedures, including the program approval application process for jurisdictions.
- provided enhanced equitable educational opportunities by implementing fiscal and other equity grants which improve the economic situation of jurisdictions with low fiscal capacity, sparse population, students travelling long distances to schools, and unequal distribution of children with special needs.
- provided improved information on educational results through local and provincial education reports.

Priority One Initiatives continued

- improved planning by changing the school budget year from a calendar year to a program based year (September to August) and implementing a planning, delivery and evaluation cycle which is centered around the program cycle in schools.

- become more responsive by decentralizing appropriate decision-making to the Regional Offices of Education so that the Department can respond more efficiently and effectively to public needs and requests.

- implemented significant cooperative projects with stakeholders, such as the provision of training to new trustees jointly with the Alberta School Trustees Association.

The implementation of the Management and Finance Plan will result in the blending of efficient and effective practices from the public and private sectors, enabling Alberta Education to provide leadership in educational and public sector management in Alberta and Canada.

Articulation of Early Childhood Services and Elementary Education

The Policy, which helps children benefit more fully from continuity in significant learning experiences and which is consistent with the principles of child development, will have been partially implemented through to Grade Six. Implementation of the Policy will have:

- simplified the Early Childhood Services Program and grant structures.

- resulted in the development and distribution of resource and learning materials, and the implementation of training programs.

- assisted in the implementation of revised provincial standards for Day Care/Early Childhood Services.

- resulted in new requirements for Early Childhood Services teacher qualifications.

Priority Two Initiatives

The following priority two initiatives have been identified for the forecast period.

Teaching Effectiveness

Over the forecast period, Alberta Education will have:

- o assisted school jurisdictions in implementing training programs for principals and other supervisors of teachers on how to conduct effective teacher evaluations.
- o developed and implemented teacher practice review procedures.
- o clarified roles and responsibilities for teacher practice reviews.
- o developed and implemented in cooperation with the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards and other education stakeholders, policy and procedures to recognize teacher excellence.
- o reviewed and updated teacher certification policies.
- o explored with the private sector, work experience and exchange programs for teachers and administrators as a means to broaden and upgrade knowledge and skills.
- o initiated and/or encouraged research to determine the relationship between increased funding and educational achievement.
- o explored the feasibility and viability of alternative instructional delivery models, e.g. greater use of paraprofessionals, subject area specialists to assist teachers, and the teacher as learning manager.

Rural Education Review

Significant changes have occurred in the distribution of student population, service centres, and transportation patterns, which may have affected the provision of programs and services in rural areas. Alberta Education will examine ways to maintain and enhance the quality of education in rural areas. By 1990, Alberta Education will have:

- o established principles for determining the economic viability of jurisdictions and its impact on the quality and equity of education provided.
- o amalgamated some jurisdictions in order to meet the principles of economic viability and to maintain a quality education.
- o examined the use of consortia and/or co-operative undertakings to provide broader programs and services at reduced costs.
- o reviewed Departmental policies and funding formulae to identify ways to improve efficiencies in rural school jurisdictions.

Priority Two Initiatives continued

Human Resource Management

The competence and abilities of Alberta Education's management and staff are a critical element to the successful achievement of the Department's goals over the next four years. The Department will have implemented a staff training and development plan so that the appropriate range of skills is available. As a result of the implementation process, Alberta Education will have:

- adopted a set of Core Values (see Attachment) which provide guidelines for day-to-day operations, decision-making, priority setting, and the behaviour of staff in Alberta Education.

- implemented a Staff Development and Training System which identifies employee training needs that are congruent with Departmental priorities and directions; provides cost-effective training through a combination of internal, external and technology resources; and monitors and evaluates the quality of training.

- refined procedures for the effective recruitment, placement and evaluation of the type of employees needed by the Department to provide continued leadership to the educational system.

- installed a system that encourages, recognizes and rewards employees for innovative ideas that improve the quality of education, and/or allow the Department to do more with less.

- implemented programs that provide enhanced training and employment opportunities for women in the Department. Strategies will include job rotations, secondments, career counselling and career information.

County Act

In co-operation with Alberta Education, the Department of Municipal Affairs will introduce amendments to the County Act that will clarify responsibilities of county councils and the county boards of education over the raising and control of local education revenues. The amended County Act will have:

- clarified the role of the county council and the county board of education.

- provided for a system of electing town respresentatives to the board of education that is more acceptable to residents of towns and summer villages.

- provided for a common services by-law.

- permitted the county council and the board of education to borrow money from one another.

Priority Two Initiatives continued

Teaching Profession Act

The introduction of a new Teaching Profession Act will have:

- clarified the role and responsibilities of the Alberta Teachers' Association in governing the teaching profession.
- established principles for the teaching profession which are consistent with the Government Policy Governing Future Legislation for the Professions and Occupations.
- incorporated the functions of the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards.

Centres of Excellence

Continual innovation is essential for an educational system to respond effectively in a dynamic and changing society. Alberta Education will encourage the generation, acceptance and use of new or improved educational concepts, processes, procedures, or services that will improve the quality of education provided to Albertans. It is expected that Alberta Education will have:

- encouraged schools to explore and develop innovations that will make learning more efficient and effective.
- implemented communication and demonstration programs to ensure that educational innovations are disseminated and implemented.
- identified in cooperation with the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards and other education stakeholders, several model schools to serve as Centres of Excellence. These schools will be viewed as exemplars in areas such as the teacher-learning process, educational management, and use of technology.

Superintendent/Principal Qualifications

Because of the rapid change in knowledge and practices regarding educational leadership and management, and the implications for the changing role of superintendents and principals, there is a need to upgrade qualifications. These educational leaders need to ensure the use of key changes in knowledge and practices to shape the education provided to students. It is expected that Alberta Education will have:

- updated qualification requirements, competencies and skills for superintendents and principals.
- implemented a voluntary superintendent certification program.
- implemented, in co-operation with stakeholders, a pilot training program for educational administrators.

Priority Two Initiatives continued

Elementary Education Review

Planning for a comprehensive review of elementary education is a proposed new initiative. The review would be undertaken in the 1990s and would be a follow-up to the Secondary Education Plan implementation.

ATTACHMENT

ALBERTA EDUCATION'S

CORE VALUES

Alberta Education
Core Values

This statement is one part of our drive toward excellence. We have just started the process of discussing our core values, our beliefs, and we are finding that they are not easy to describe or explain. However, I am pleased with the comments and discussions that have been generated to date.

I believe that education is the most important function by which a democratic society fosters its continual advancement and survival. Without education, I believe that society loses its sense of direction, its commitment to shared human values, and its ability to mount a sustained and purposeful effort to improve our collective and individual lives.

Alberta Education is committed to ensuring that the best possible education is available to students in Alberta from Early Childhood Services through Grade 12 so that they can participate in and influence the shape of the future. We know that it is difficult, and probably impossible, to predict the future. However, I believe that if we have a clear vision of what we want, we can take positive and practical steps in shaping our future.

I am convinced that the toward excellence concept will help us in achieving this aim. It can help us to do better the things we already do well. The core values provide a set of clear beliefs which can guide decisions that cannot be handled with knowledge and expertise alone. They provide a solid basis on which we can make professional judgements. They form the standards for measuring the extent of our long-term progress. Commitment to the toward excellence concept means that we all are working toward the same shared goal; that we all are applying our core values to what we do and how we do it; and that we all are sharing the same vision of where we are going and how we are going to get there. While individuals may take a different route to achieve this aim, everyone should be clear about the destination and be anxious and eager to reach it. The core values are key to shaping and managing the future successfully.

Alberta Education and school jurisdictions exist solely to ensure that our children and young adults receive the best education we can provide. This means that you and I, and other people in Alberta Education, are helping to achieve this goal. We need to be firm in our resolve but also be aware of changing internal and external conditions, and adapt our actions, our organization, and our use of technology as appropriate. To achieve our goal efficiently, we must delegate authority appropriately and keep our organizational procedures as lean and as simple as possible. Our core values form a dependable and durable basis on which we will continue to improve an excellent educational system.

This statement of core values contains revisions resulting from discussions throughout the Department. For now and the foreseeable future what follows is the proposed statement of core values for Alberta Education. The statement contains a wealth of ideas and information. I hope that you have noticed the statement of core values recognizes the importance of people --you and me and all the other people in our Department -- as the key to the success of our efforts.

I encourage you to carry on examining this statement yourself, and with your colleagues. It is intended to serve as a guide for all those in Alberta Education. The statement will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the light of changing needs and priorities.

I strongly encourage you to apply these guidelines in every aspect of your endeavours, and to continue to provide me with your comments and suggestions.

Reno Bosetti

ALBERTA EDUCATION
CORE VALUES

Students

Education is a critical function of society. Alberta Education believes that education, accessible to all Albertans, is the most efficient way of transmitting the required knowledge, skills and values to foster the advancement and survival of a democratic society. Through education, students are assisted to realize their full potential, contribute to society, and shape their individual and collective futures. Students who receive their education in Alberta must be prepared to meet the challenges of the present and the future.

Leadership Innovation, Excellence

In pursuing the best possible education for all students, Alberta Education provides leadership by communicating clear directions and expectations, developing and implementing innovations, and promoting endeavours that are designed to enhance education. The commitment to the pursuit of excellence is demonstrated by encouraging ongoing improvements in the teaching and learning process, including the curriculum taught in schools, so that it meets the changing needs of students. Alberta Education also recognizes the importance of positive leadership by all members of the community and takes active steps to encourage these individuals.

Policy Based

Operating within Government direction and policies, Alberta Education recommends to the Government, through its Minister, strategies and plans for improving the quality of education and managing the future of education. In fulfilling this responsibility, Alberta Education considers the needs of students and society, and develops policies and programs on the basis of the most up-to-date knowledge available.

Accountability, Achievement of High Standards

Within broad provincial directions and policies, school boards, private schools and private Early Childhood Services operators are delegated the authority to deliver educational programs and services to students and parents. Alberta Education is accountable to Government, through its Minister, for ensuring that the actions of school boards, private schools, and private Early Childhood Services operators meet provincial policies and standards. This accountability is ensured through effective monitoring, evaluating and auditing. Alberta Education works with school authorities to ensure that Alberta's schools are providing a high quality education.

Stewardship

Alberta Education demonstrates leadership in public sector stewardship by managing the funds allocated by the Legislature effectively and efficiently, and by distributing public funds fairly and equitably under the direction of the Legislature. As a result, the Government and the public can be confident that students receive a quality education, full value for the public funds expended, and that the public sector is continually improving the way in which limited public revenues are used for the benefit of society.

Cooperation, Participation

Alberta Education consults and cooperates with members of the community, both in the public and private sectors. The consultation process provides an opportunity for members of the community to contribute to policy development in education. It also results in policies which are innovative and which reflect the needs and values of a variety of individuals and organizations.

Quality Service, Professionalism

Alberta Education staff provide quality services and information to Albertans in a professional and helpful manner. Staff are encouraged to be innovative and to demonstrate initiative. Individual and collective achievements are assessed on the basis of results obtained and recognized in an appropriate manner. Alberta Education is an organization where staff exhibit mutual respect and courtesy, where constructive dissent and debate are encouraged, where a diversity of expertise and disciplines is used, and where people have the opportunity to achieve their professional aspirations.